

CLAIMS

1. An endgate for a pickup truck having a cargo box, the endgate comprising:

5 a lower portion partially defining the endgate and movably mountable with respect to the pickup truck for movement between an open position and a closed position; and

10 an upper portion operatively connected to the lower portion and further defining the endgate, the upper portion being selectively movable with respect to the lower portion to alter the height of the endgate when the lower portion is in the closed position to facilitate access to the cargo box.

2. The endgate of claim 1, wherein the upper portion is pivotably mounted with respect to the lower portion.

3. The endgate of claim 1, further comprising an electric latch operatively connected to the lower portion and configured to selectively engage a striker on the pickup truck body for retaining the lower portion in the closed position; and a device on the upper portion operatively connected to the electric latch to selectively cause
5 the latch to disengage the striker to allow movement of the lower portion to the open position.

4. The endgate of claim 1, further comprising a latch and a striker; wherein the latch is selectively engageable with the striker to prevent the upper portion from moving relative to the lower portion.

5. The endgate of claim 4, wherein the latch is an electric latch on the lower portion; wherein the striker is on the upper portion; and further comprising a device

on the upper portion operatively connected to the latch to selectively cause the latch to disengage the striker.

6. The endgate of claim 1, further comprising at least one hinge pivotably interconnecting the upper portion to the lower portion.

7. The endgate of claim 6, wherein said at least one hinge is a gooseneck hinge pivotably mounted inside the lower portion.

8. The endgate of claim 7, further comprising a stop member sufficiently positioned within the lower portion to restrict movement of the upper portion by interfering with movement of said at least one hinge.

9. The endgate of claim 6, wherein the cargo box defines a cargo area; wherein the upper portion is characterized by a substantially flat surface; and wherein the upper portion is pivotable between a first position in which the surface faces the cargo area and a second position in which the surface is substantially horizontal.

10. A pickup truck having a cargo box, the pickup truck comprising:

two cargo box sidewalls at least partially defining an endgate opening;

5 an endgate including a lower portion and an upper portion, the lower portion being pivotably mounted with respect to the two sidewalls at the endgate opening for movement between an open position and a closed position, and the upper portion being pivotably connected to the lower portion for movement between a first position and a second position;

wherein the upper portion is adjacent to the lower portion and extending upward therefrom in the first position to result in a first endgate height, and wherein the upper portion in the second position is pivoted downward to result in a second endgate height less than the first endgate height.

11. The pickup truck of claim 10, further comprising a striker mounted to one of the lower portion and the upper portion, and a latch mounted on the other of the lower portion and the upper portion and engageable with the striker for selectively rigidly connecting the upper portion to the lower portion.

12. The pickup truck of claim 10, further comprising at least one hinge interconnecting the lower portion and the upper portion.

13. The pickup truck of claim 12, wherein said at least one hinge is a gooseneck hinge.

14. The pickup truck of claim 10, further comprising a striker and an electrically-actuated latch, the latch being engageable with the striker to retain the lower portion in the closed position; and a device operatively connected to the latch to selectively cause disengagement of the latch and the striker.

15. The pickup truck of claim 14, wherein the latch is on the lower portion; wherein the striker is on one of the two sidewalls; and wherein the device is on the upper portion.

16. An endgate for a pickup truck having a cargo box, the endgate comprising:

5 a lower portion partially defining the endgate and pivotably mountable
with respect to the pickup truck for movement between an open position and a closed
position;

at least one hinge;

10 an upper portion pivotably connected to the lower portion by said at least
one hinge and further defining the endgate, the upper portion being selectively pivotable
with respect to the lower portion between a first position in which the endgate is
characterized by a first height and a second position in which the endgate is characterized
by a second height different from the first height to facilitate access to the cargo box; and

15 a striker mounted to one of the lower portion and the upper portion, and a
latch mounted on the other of the lower portion and the upper portion and engageable
with the striker for selectively rigidly connecting the upper portion to the lower portion.